(c) Recent efforts of Air India to enhance its market share include:

(1) Fleet modernisation by induction of four Boeing 747-400 aircraft;

(2) Adding new destinations like Dar-Es-Salam, Durban, Johannesburg, Jakarta etc.

(3) Product upgradation through a comprehensive product excellence action plan.

(4) Introduction of joint programmes with Indian Airlines like Hub & Spoke operations, frequent flier programme, computerised reservation system for enhancing service to the Indian air passengers.

Air Services between Calcutta and Kailashar

314. SHRI VISHNU KANT SHASTRI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian Airlines have discontinued its services from Kailshar (North Tripura) to Calcutta via Khowai and Kamalpur despite heavy rush of passengers;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and what alternative arrangements are being made to resume air services between Calcutta and Kailashar;

(c) whether Government have considered to handover this route to a private operator, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) whether the State Government is competent to approach a private Air Taxi Operator and grant this air route to them, if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) Indian Airlines discontinued its services to Kailashar, Khowai and Kamalpur from early 1974.

(b) With the phasing out of DC-3 (Dakota) in early 1974, the services to Kailashar, Khowai and Kamalpur were discontinued, Kailashar Airport is not suitable for operation of any aircraft in the fleet of Indian Airlines

(c) and (d) Any operator whether Government or private can operate to any station open for scheduled operations.

Air services between Calcutta and Dibrugarh

315. SHRI VISHNU KANT SHASTRI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian Airlines and Vayudoot which were operating air services from Calcutta to Bibrugarh and back touching at Guwahati, Tezpur, Jorhat have since been discontinued;

(b) the reasons for discontinuance of these air services; and

(c) what other alternative arrangements have been made or are being made to link Calcutta and Dibrugarh via Guwahati, Tezpur and Jorhat by air for the convenience of the people?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Due to phasing out of F 27 aircraft and due to commercial and operational reasons, Indian Airlines and Vayudoot Limited respectively withdrew this service.

(c) At present, IA is operating services on the routes Calcutta—Dibrugarh (four times weekly), Calcutta—Guwahati - Dibrugarh (twice weekly), and Calcutta - Tezpur - Jorhat—Calcutta (thrice weekly) Indian Airlines and Vayudoot have no plans at present to connect Tezpur and Jorhat to Dibrugarh.